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STEPHEN D. COAN
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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Candle Safety Awareness Day is Monday, December 12, 2011

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan announced that Monday, December 12, 2011 will be Candle Safety Awareness Day and advised consumers to use candles safely during the holiday season, and also throughout the year.

State Fire Marshal Coan said, "Many of the holidays celebrated at this time of year use candles. Sadly, the increased candle use at this time of year causes a boost in candle fires. Candles are left burning unattended and children are left alone in rooms with burning candles. I can't stress enough that candles should be blown out when you leave the room and children should always be supervised, especially when around burning candles." He added, "December 24 is the day on which the most candle fires occur, particularly due to candles burning too close to holiday decorations. I urge the community to practice safe candle use to keep your families safe."

In 2010, candles caused 144 fires of all types. These fires caused 11 civilian injuries, seven firefighter injuries and an estimated dollar loss of \$3.9 million in damages. There was an 11% increase from the 130 fires of all types started by candles in Massachusetts in 2009, but a 52% decrease this past decade from the 299 candle fires in Massachusetts in 2001.

Marshal Coan said, "Fire education efforts greatly contributed to the decrease in candle fires since the year 2001, due to the efforts of public fire safety officials who identified the problem and worked with candle manufacturers to promote the safe candle use."

Marshal Coan recommends that in order to reduce the risk of fire, candles should be used within a *Circle of Safety*, which consists of five components:

- ◆ Burn candles within a one-foot circle, free of anything that can burn.
- ◆ Never leave candles burning unattended.
- ◆ Always extinguish candles after use.

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- ◆ Use a non-combustible saucer or candleholder.
- ◆ Keep candles out of reach of children and pets.

For additional information on candle safety, visit the Department of Fire Services web page at www.mass.gov/dfs or contact the Fire Data and Public Education Unit at 978-567-3380 or toll-free at 1-877-9NO-FIRE (1-877-966-3472).

